

# the ALESTLE

Alton - East St. Louis - Edwardsville

March 26, 2015

Vol. 67 No. 26

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### DISCLAIMER

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## The Heroin Epidemic

Professor, alumna shoot documentary illustrating growing problem

CAITLIN GROVE

Alestle Lifestyles Editor

In Madison County, there were 23 confirmed heroin overdose deaths in 2014, according to the Madison County Coroner's Office. It can be argued very little is being done to improve this statistic. However, two members of the SIUE family have taken matters into their own hands in an effort to make a difference.

Mass communications professor Cory Byers and alumna Ashley Seering, who was also a former Alestle employee, have worked together in a number of documentaries during the past few years, and their current project is set to have quite the impact.

"The Heroin Project" is a documentary that will expose the heroin issue in this area, and illustrate through personal experiences why it is something everyone should be paying closer attention to.

Seering said the main focus of this documentary is to illustrate the magnitude of the heroin issue.

"A lot of people will ask us what we're working on and we'll tell them it's about the heroin problem and they're like, 'Oh we have a heroin problem?' A lot of it is to make people aware of it, just sort of a general overview of here are the different problems, here's what's being done about it and here's what needs to still be done," Seering said.

Byers said the idea for "The Heroin Project" originated a few years prior, when Director of Alumni Affairs Steve Jankowski approached him in search for help on a project regarding the heroin problem.

Jankowski said what immediately stood out to him was Byers and Seering's professionalism.

"When I got involved with Project Drug Smart through the Edwardsville school system, it was natural to think of working with [Byers] and his staff to help produce the videos that we produced for the Edwardsville school district and videos that eventually would be shown to the justice department," Jankowski said. "The work they did was outstanding; the production — everything from floor managers to camera people — did a fantastic job."

Byers said for this project, Jankowski did the majority of the producing, while Byers handled the filming side of things. Involved in this project were various mass communications students, including Seering.

"Fast forward to last spring, [the Madison County State's Attorney's Office] asked us if we could shoot their task force meetings, which they held once a month at the Madison County Administration Building," Byers said. "We went there and shot one, then started coming up with the idea of doing a more in-depth documentary on it."

Seering said she got involved with these projects after her freshman year and has since been in contact with the Madison County State's Attorney's Office.

"When I was in my senior year I started doing those task force meetings, so basically just recording the meetings and putting it on YouTube," Seering said. "Then just from going to those, I was looking for my next idea — I like keeping my eye out for what might be a good story. We already knew most of the people involved and had really good access, I thought this might be a really good thing to do a longer piece on."

Seering and Byers began this project in April 2014. They then started developing the idea from there.

Seering said the main focus of the documentary has changed numerous times dur-

ing the production process.

"When we first started, we knew there was an issue but we weren't exactly sure what the main story would be," Seering said. "Then the state's attorney introduced us to different families who are included in the documentary."

Seering said each family involved tells a different story and offers a diverse point of view.

"We have one where the child overdosed and is no longer alive, then we have another kid who's in the midst of his addiction and another that's a success story where she basically beat addiction and is in recovery now," Seering said. "It's kind of like each path you can go down. Another big part of it has been the fact that prescription drugs lead to heroin addiction a lot of the times, which we were aware of beforehand, but it wasn't until we started doing more interviews that we narrowed our focus."

Byers said this project has been a collaborative effort between himself and Seering, the Madison County State's Attorney's Office and the task force.

"We've gotten a lot of access and contacts through the Madison County State's Attorney's Office, so you can say we are in partnership with them. They don't have any creative control over it; so it's basically been us coming up with what we might want to include, trying to find people," Byers said. "The [task force] meetings were great — a lot of people who go to meetings are directly involved, so it's a really easy way to contact people."

Jankowski said he is impressed with the work Byers and Seering have done with this effort.

"[Seering] decided to [do] this heroin documentary, working with [Byers], and the trailer that I've seen is outstanding," Jankowski said. "It's going to be a dynamic and very powerful piece, thanks to their professionalism and [Seering's] and [Byers'] desire to do something very powerful and effective in the war against heroin."

Byers said for the majority of shoots, they go on location as opposed to simply shooting in a studio.

"We've met people at parks, for example, because a lot we shot last summer was when it was nice out," Byers said. "We've done a couple interviews here in the studio but we like to go to places, just to get a different look in the background. We interviewed the coroner at the morgue, which was kind of creepy. We interviewed the state's attorney in a court room, a [district attorney] in his office in St.

**"That's what's always been appealing to me with documentary work — it doesn't require a huge crew and a ton of money, it can be done with a few people and a couple cameras."**

Ashley Seering  
SIUE Alumna

Louis and we've interviewed a couple counselors in their counseling centers."

Byers said they had one noteworthy shoot at a prison boot camp.

"The guy who is currently struggling with addiction was sent to jail, but had the opportunity to go to this boot camp — like 120 days of boot camp versus three years in



Photo Courtesy of "The Heroin Project: A Documentary's" Facebook page

jail," Byers said. "So we went and interviewed him there, which was kind of cool. We had to make a list of every single thing we were bringing in to make sure we didn't leave a paper clip or something that they would use to break out with."

Seering said they like to do their interviews in a neutral space in order to make it feel as comfortable as possible.

"Part of what I like about documentaries and part of what I think is important too, especially if it's a serious topic, is keeping it as small as possible because not everyone is comfortable on camera," Seering said. "If you have 15 people and all of these giant pieces of equipment, I think it can be really intimidating. The stories that they're telling are definitely very personal, so I think part of that is trying to make them feel like you're just having a conversation. That's why we divide the work; when I'm doing the interviews, he can be on the cameras and I don't have to be looking away, so the person is engaged the whole time. That's what's always been appealing to me with documentary

something to show rather than just people talking," Byers said. "We had a shoot out in a cemetery out in Troy; we had a few cop cars, an ambulance and rescue people. And it's all at night so we had to bring lights and a generator and had about five or six people on the crew. We were all really nervous about it because we had all of this stuff and the more things you have the more things can go wrong. It actually went pretty smoothly and we got everything we needed. That was fun in that we were able to pull it off like we planned it."

Seering said she has been doing a lot of the editing on the documentary and has a love-hate relationship with it.

"It's really cool to see it coming together, just because we've spent so much time on it and put so much effort into it, but it's also a very difficult experience," Seering said. "It's taking hours and hours of interviews and trying to make a story out of it. Then add in all of the B-roll, constantly adding to it — we didn't necessarily have a start-to-finish plan when we started it, so it's been a big learning experience for me. It's an hour long right now and this is the first time I've ever done anything that's longer than 15 minutes."

Byers said the goal length for the documentary is about an hour, much longer than their usual projects.

"We don't want it to be so long people get bored with it, but we have a lot of material and we want to make sure to include everything we need to," Byers said. "One of the goals was to have it available for educators to use and I think an hour is a good length where they can show it but still have time to talk about it too."

Byers said they generally both shoot with Canon T3i DSLR cameras, which are fairly easy to transport.

"We can lug a bunch of equipment with us if we need to, but generally it's just two-camera interviews — so in case we don't have B-roll, we can cut to the other camera," Byers said. "We'll have two cameras, two tripods, a

work — it doesn't require a huge crew and a ton of money, it can be done with a few people and a couple cameras."

Byers said his favorite part of this particular project has been the B-roll reenactments.

"Because we don't have a lot of footage of the stuff, we've done some re-creation of some things that have happened, just to have





Photo Courtesy of "The Heroin Project: A Documentary's" Facebook page

## DOCUMENTARY | from pg. 2

mic stand and then an audio recorder and that's about all we have for the outside interviews; anything inside, we have a light kit. Depending on the size of the shoot, we will recruit other students to come with us. Most of the time it's just us two — she asks the questions and I'll watch the cameras and have the headphones on to watch the audio."

Jankowski said SIUE should be proud of its mass communications department.

"Professors and teachers like [Byers] and students like [Seering] represent the university incredibly well and have won accolades, not only in educational circles, but in professional video circles," Jankowski said. "They

are at the top of their game — they should be celebrated and we should be proud of them."

Byers said once people view this documentary, he hopes it will increase their awareness on the seriousness of this issue — especially parents.

"It kind of depends on who the person is; some of the parents talked about the signs of their kids being on it and a lot of them didn't have any clue. Now that they've gone through it, they look back and say, 'Oh, I should have realized; the signs were there; I just didn't know what they were.' So that's a big part of it — maybe parents will be more involved and keep an eye on their kids," Byers said.

Seering said she hopes viewers learn from the stories presented and learn that anyone can be susceptible to addiction.

"The dad of the son who's struggling with addiction said he's been ashamed to tell people about the problem, but really the only way you can fix the issue is by talking about it and by getting the awareness out," Seering said. "I think part of it is changing the stereotypes — these families aren't all necessarily all low income, inner city, stereotypical, back-alley low-life kind of people — these are middle America suburbs that are being affected by this problem. I think if people get rid of this stereotype they might actually say, 'Hey, this could really happen to my kid and I do

need to make sure I'm aware of this problem and I'm doing something to make sure my family is not affected by it.' I hope people aren't as afraid to talk about it and aren't immediately shunned by society if they are a heroin addict or have a family member who is."

Seering said once the editing process is done, they have someone to do an original score of music. They are planning on having screenings in April and during the summer.

For more information, visit the Facebook page "The Heroin Project: A Documentary."

Caillin Grove can be reached at [cgrove@alestlelive.com](mailto:cgrove@alestlelive.com) or 650-3527.

# Student Senate has one travel request left for fiscal year

CODY KING

Alestle Copy Editor

Student Government announced during the Friday, March 20 meeting that the senate has one more travel request grant left for this fiscal year. According to Financial Officer Tre Martin, the rest of the travel requests will be for the upcoming school year and in the hands of several new SG members.

"Keep in mind that everything we have coming forward now is going to be out of the new fiscal year," Martin said. "For a lot of us, that's money that we aren't going to be here for, for next year."

Student organizations are expected to apply for funding 10 weeks beforehand. However, given the budget limitations and the current time frame, Student Body President Nasir Almasri said any new travel requests will automatically be placed in the budget for the upcoming school year.

"If somebody came in to re-

quest next week, it would already be in next year's budget," Almasri said. "We are at the end of this year's budget — we are right on time. It's surprising we have one more; usually, we are out [of travel request funds] by now."

SG forms a budget plan for each school year and it varies with each senate board. Almasri said SG's budget for this fiscal year has been very efficient in serving students.

The procedure for travel requests has stayed the same for several years. According to Almasri, whichever student organization takes the initiative for requesting funds on time first is likely to get the funding.

"The process is pretty straightforward — it's first come, first serve," Almasri said. "There might not even be one more group that comes, just because you have to apply 10 weeks out and we are less than that from the end of the school year. More likely than not,

we probably aren't going to get an application for that last spot."

According to Almasri, travel requests and their impact are considerable on the student body and the campus as a whole.

"The idea of travel — some universities don't even do it," Almasri said. "When you work in Student Government so much, you're kind of like, 'Oh, it seems silly going to a conference.' But, for students, I think it is really, really valuable a lot of the time. I don't think we realize that because we are sitting here approving and we aren't going to them ourselves. Personally, I think it is very important and frankly, I think it is kind of underrated. But, it's nice to be able to support them and to make sure that [student organizations] are able to go and it's not all out of their pocket."

Leftover money from one fiscal year is still in the hands of SG. Almasri said there is a process followed by the senate board each year

to account for the money.

"The money left over can stay within the budget," Almasri said. "We carry over money from year to year — it's called 'cash carryover.' You have to carry over one quarter of the budget, and that could allow us to overdraw parts of the same budget a little bit — not a lot."

In terms of the budget cuts that are soon to follow for next year, SG may be affected. Almasri said the budget outcome is dependent upon what happens to the Kimmel Student Involvement Center.

"If Kimmel's budget gets hit a little bit then it could affect our budget," Almasri said. "Kimmel isn't fully fee-funded and we are fully fee-funded. So, long story short, some of their budget could get put on to us. But that's just the way it is when budget cuts hit. This is what happens."

According to Almasri, SG maintains a balance to support both the student body and the administration.

"It happens from time to time when people are looking for a lot of organizations and groups to help them make their case," Almasri said. "It's hard as Student Government leaders because you might feel that that's the right thing, but our job is to both understand the administration's position because their goal is long term, and understand the student's position, whose goals are short term, and so you have to balance those."

Almasri said there is still hope for the budget cuts and nothing is certain until the budget cuts are revealed.

"You brace yourself for the worst and hope that it comes a little better," Almasri said. "We have a Republican governor and a very Democratic legislator, so Rauner is probably not going to get everything he wants. But, it's a bold move and we'll see what happens."

Read more about Student Government at [alestlelive.com](http://alestlelive.com)

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Robert Glennon is Regents' Professor and Morris K. Udall Professor of Law & Public Policy in the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona. Glennon is the author of the highly acclaimed "Water Follies: Groundwater Pumping and the Fate of America's Fresh Waters" (Island Press, 2002.) Glennon has been a guest on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," "Talk of the Nation" with Neal Conan, "The Diane Rehm Show," C-SPAN2's "Book TV" and numerous National Public Radio shows. He has been a commentator for American Public Media's "Marketplace." He is featured in the recent documentary, "Last Call at the Oasis."

Tickets can be purchased at the Morris University Center Information Desk or [artsandissues.com](http://artsandissues.com)

50 free tickets for SIUE students courtesy of Student Affairs



# POLICE BLOTTER

3-12-15

An officer issued a citation to Dylan A. Funk for speeding 49 mph in a 25 mph speed zone and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. The offense occurred on South University Drive at P2 Road.

3-13-15

Officers received a call of a vehicle off the road on North University Drive. Samantha N. Praul was arrested for driving while suspended. She was then transported to the SIUE Police Department where she was processed and released with a notice to appear. Praul was also issued a citation for driving while suspended and operating an uninsured motor vehicle.

3-15-15

Officers met with a resident assistant in Prairie Hall who stated a subject on the Interim Separation list snuck in through a window. An officer said the subject left through a window, got into a vehicle and left campus.

3-16-15

An officer took a report of a traffic accident between a vehicle and a deer on Poag Road near Northwest University Drive.

An officer took a report of advertisement stickers being placed on several signs in Bluff Hall parking lot and on several stop signs.

An officer checked the Cougar Lake recreation area for a report of a suspicious vehicle parked on the edge of the lake. The officer located the vehicle and determined the subjects were allowed to be there. The area was secure.

A mother called and requested a welfare check on her son who does not live on campus. An officer made contact with him and told him to contact his mother.

3-17-15

An officer issued a citation to Amanda E. Spell for driving while using an electronic device. She was also issued a written warning for speeding 39 mph in a 25 mph speed zone. The offenses occurred on South University Drive at P2 Road.

An officer issued a citation to Anna G. Barnes for speeding 44 mph in a 25 mph speed zone. The offense occurred on South University Drive at P2 Road.

An officer issued a citation to Jacob Nantz for expired registration. The offense occurred on South University Drive at P2 Road.

Officers checked the area of Lot B after a 911 call reporting a female was being forced into a gray Mitsubishi. The vehicle was located in the Prairie Hall lot. The subjects said they were just playing around.

An officer issued a citation to Winter A. Surbeck for speeding 66 mph in a 45 mph speed zone. The offense occurred on South University Drive at Stadium Drive.

An officer took a report of a traffic accident between two vehicles. A citation was issued to Corey M.

Johnson for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident. The incident occurred on East University Drive.

An officer responded to Bluff Hall regarding a female subject calling and saying another female subject came to her room, hit her and pulled her hair. The victim did not want to press charges.

3-18-15

An officer responded to Woodland Hall regarding a 19-year-old male who was going in and out of consciousness possibly due to alcohol poisoning. An Edwardsville ambulance was dispatched, but the subject refused medical transport. An investigation continues.

A subject told campus police that a male who had been previously barred from campus was in Cougar Village. Officers searched the area but were unable to locate him.

3-19-15

An officer issued a citation to Jaclyn N. Harris for speeding 42 mph in a 25 mph speed zone. The offense occurred on Northwest Entrance Road at Lot 11.

3-20-15

An officer met with a student who reported her roommate had verbally threatened her. The case remains under investigation.

A subject called 911 and reported a fight involving several male subjects on Lot 4C. Officers arrived on scene and made contact with a male and female who said they had been struck by a male suspect who fled the area prior to the officer's arrival. An investigation continues.

3-21-15

Dion L. Tyler was arrested on a felony warrant by the Edwardsville Police Department for unlawful use of a credit card. Tyler was transported to the SIUE Police Department where he was processed and released after posting a \$2,500 cash bond.

A subject who came to the SIUE Police Department to post bail for another subject was found to have an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Theodore Harris was arrested on a felony warrant by the Edwardsville Police Department for unlawful use of a credit card. Harris was processed and released to the Edwardsville Police Department, as he was unable to post bond.

3-23-15

An officer issued a citation to Kushan P. Patel for disobeying a stop sign. The offense occurred on South Circle Drive and Evergreen Parking Lot.

3-24-15

An officer responded to East University Drive at North University Drive for an accident involving two vehicles. The officer issued a citation to Logan T. Null for failure to yield. One vehicle was towed.

An officer issued a citation to Jonah Wayland for speeding 40 mph in a 25 mph speed zone. The offense occurred on Northwest Entrance Drive at Lot 11.

## TUNNEL of OPPRESSION



Freshman psychology major Sydney Meyer, of Beardstown, and freshman nursing major Michelle Sydow, of Columbia, Ill., fill out a questionnaire at the end of their walk through the tunnel.

| Photo by Lashai Spencer/Alestle



Sophomore early childhood education major Abrilla Jones, of Fairview Heights, represents SIUE Black Girls Rock! at this year's Tunnel of Oppression.

| Photo by Lashai Spencer/Alestle

## MARCHDOWN 2015



Members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. reenact scenes from "Life," a film starring Eddie Murphy and Martin Lawrence, at Marchdown 2k15 Step Show.

| Photo by Lashai Spencer/Alestle



St. Louis University's chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. steps at Marchdown 2k15 Step Show in the Meridian Ballroom on Friday, March 20.

| Photo by Adam Mason/Alestle



SIUE's dance team, High Definition, performs during the Marchdown 2k15 Step Show intermission in the Meridian Ballroom on Friday, March 20.

| Photo by Adam Mason/Alestle



## student organization provides support system, unites struggling students

**PUJA MEHTA**  
Alestle Reporter

As college students, many times the help or support of a peer can be all a person needs to keep going. Collegiate 100 is a national organization that teaches leadership, provides networking with professionals and mentors, encourages its members to maintain a solid GPA and graduate and also get involved in the community through volunteer efforts.

Collegiate 100 has recently come to SIUE to help relieve some of the stresses students face while attending college.

Senior Spanish major Gregory Collins, of Alton, and one of the founders of Collegiate 100 at SIUE, said this organization is reaching out to students that are new to the university, to help them become comfortable with campus life and encourage them to complete their education.

"I don't want to be just a student that's taking everything in for myself. The blessings and rewards that I receive, I hope to give back, not just to the African-American community, but to the community in general. And that's what Collegiate 100 is looking to do — to give back," Collins said.

Many organizations on campus focus on helping improve the community, but the way Collegiate 100 is going about this is unique. Collins said a major problem on campus is the number of people who drop out in a given semester, and Collegiate 100 is targeting that issue.

"As Collegiate 100 members, we want to make sure that the retention rate is increasing and not decreasing," Collins said. "The retention rate over the past few years has been dropping. We have a huge amount of students that once they come to the university, they have no concept of how to study, how to meet with the professor and just the strategies it takes to succeed on campus."

A lot of times, a good college experience is based on the friendships built through organizations and clubs that students can participate in. Academic Adviser Michael Jones, who helped bring this organization to campus, said he has a special interest in helping the students who are not part of the more common groups on campus.

"My role as an academic adviser is I work specifically for under-represented populations, more specifically with African-American students. I have a passion and it's my research interest, for helping African-American males excel," Jones said. "I saw Collegiate 100 as an opportunity on campus to bring about this organization that would attract the guy who may be more likely to get suspended for academic reasons, but may not be interested in the typical Greek life or athletics. So we want to reach that person from all avenues."

Not only can this group help students invest in campus life, but another founder of Collegiate 100 on campus, Charles Martin, a senior criminal justice major from Chicago, said it can help motivate them beyond the classroom.

"College isn't just about coming to class, taking a test and going home. It's about networking. It's about meeting people. It's about finding others like you to support you on this journey through college because — no matter what anyone says — college isn't inherently easy. It's a long road of trials and tribulations," Martin said. "And I wish that every person that came to college was able to stay in college or had the drive to stay in college. I feel like this organization can help people who may need that extra push to stay here and excel here. As a leader, I have a responsibility to cater to that."

Even though there are many other organizations geared toward helping students succeed, Jones said Collegiate 100 will help people in a more direct way than other groups.

"The niche that Collegiate 100 has is that its No. 1 focus is networking and the other No. 1 focus is community involvement," Jones said. "Everybody tells you, 'Go network, go network, go network,' but when it's time to network, 'What do I do?' This organization is made specifically for young people to learn how to network and to give back to their community. So

the idea is to build up the next regime of leadership, so that when it's their time to go find a job, network and do business, they already kind of have a foundation."

While Collegiate 100 is aiming to help students build leadership skills, Martin said it is special because it involves students encouraging one another.

"There are other organization[s] who go out and do their community service. They read to children, they clean up parks [and] they tutor middle school kids. But if you pass up a struggling college student — your peer — you pass them up on your way to an elementary school, you're doing your peer a disservice," Martin said. "Your elders can give you advice, but sometimes it's a little easier to listen to your peers because they're more closely related to your situation. They're sort of going through the same trials and tribulations you're going through in the same time period. There are some things that your elders may not understand or may not have gone through. So when you have people your age trying to help you, sometimes it can mean a little more."

Collins said the interaction between students is the best part of being in Collegiate 100.

"Reaching out to and sharing with the students is my favorite part of this," Collins said. "You have a chance to make a change in someone else's life just by taking the steps to be a part of this program."

Jones said the most critical way Collegiate 100 can impact students is by inspiring them to graduate.

"To me, the most important thing is that people graduate and develop leadership skills, even if you don't graduate here. My concern is graduation and a sense of belonging. For many African-American males that don't last here at SIUE, it's not because of the academic side, but because of the social side — because they don't have a sense of belonging. And when you have a sense of belonging somewhere, you're more likely to succeed academically," Jones said.

Even though Collegiate 100 places a focus on the African-American community, Collins said everyone is welcome to join.

"This is not just for African-American males, it's for students in general. We just realize that the African-American community is one community that has been at risk in some forms. We're looking to help any student," Collins said.

Jones said the reason African-American males are the focus of this organization is due to its origins.

"I'm a part of Emerging 100, which is the transitional group from Collegiate 100. So you have 100 Black Men of America and it's a national organization, started by close to 100 Black Men in New York City. And one of the founding members moved to St. Louis, [Mo.] and brought 100 Black Men to St. Louis [Mo.]. So St. Louis [Mo.] has one of the first Collegiate 100 Chapters in the nation. Emerging 100 is the 25-to-30-year-old organization that Collegiate 100 transitions to — then they transition to 100 Black Men," Jones said.

With all the ties it has to other organizations, Collegiate 100 will play a role in hosting several events in order to achieve its objective of affecting change. However, Jones said one of his first priorities is to institute a freshmen academy that will work to prepare newcomers who could potentially join the organization.

"Ideally, in the future, my goal is to really establish this freshmen academy from day one, where Collegiate 100 will get involved with moving day, setting up tables and letting the community know who we are and what our intentions are. The focus is networking, mentoring and community service. So if a student comes out and says, 'I want to connect,' then I can connect them with somebody," Jones said.

Collegiate 100 is also planning various public events that will be open to all students.

"We'll have workshops for students; we'll have different symposiums. For example, we'll have a 'How to Treat a Lady' symposium," Collins said.

Read more about Collegiate 100 at [alestlelive.com](http://alestlelive.com).

100  
Collegiate



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# OPINION

Questions or comments regarding this section? Contact Opinion Editor at 650-3527 or [opinion@alestlelive.com](mailto:opinion@alestlelive.com).

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Thursday, March 26, 2015

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Letters may be submitted at the Alestle office located in the Morris University Center, Room 2022 or via e-mail at [opinion@alestlelive.com](mailto:opinion@alestlelive.com).

All hard copy letters should be typed and double-spaced. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. Include phone number, signature, class rank and major.

We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar and content. Care will be taken to ensure that the letter's message is not lost or altered.

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The name Alestle is an acronym derived from the names of the three campus locations of Southern Illinois University: Alton, East St. Louis and Edwardsville.

The Alestle is published on Thursdays in print and on Tuesdays online during the fall and spring semesters. A print edition is available Wednesdays during summer semesters.

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## University needs to focus budget on hands-on learning tools

As people who have been in school for more than 12 years, we can all relate to the constant, vexatious struggle of memorizing boring facts. The university can help eliminate the mundane nature of schoolwork by focusing classroom concepts on real-world issues.

Puja Mehta  
Alestle  
Reporter

Projects similar to "The Heroin Project" that mass communications instructor Cory Byers is working on are inherently interesting to students and applicable to the times. Research studies with these themes are the kind the university needs to place a stronger financial focus on for students. Spending money focused on a better education is critical to keep in mind as the university faces a budget crisis.

"The Heroin Project" and other endeavors like this are optimal for student learning because they involve the application of the subject. In this instance, mass communications will be much better understood if students have hands-on experience with making films or documentaries like this one. In other areas of study, such as science, funding should be focused on things in the lab, such as Petri dishes, pipettes, or even more complex machinery.

Students looking for careers in the fields in which they are studying need to learn how to use appliances and technologies as modern as the

ones they might encounter in the future. Even though some of these mechanisms may be more expensive than textbooks, creating projects for students that allow them to learn about devising a whole research study from start to finish will promote critical thinking skills.

Not only should money be spent on studies like "The Heroin Project" for students to learn in a more hands-on manner, but the topic of the study is also integral for learning. Heroin is a real-world, modern-day problem that prowls under the surface of everyday life for a college student, and the relatable nature of the topic makes it inherently interesting.

The university can focus on topics as compelling as heroin outside of the lab too. Professors should focus their lessons plans on the grand scheme of things, instead of minute details that students memorize for a test. By learning about the bigger picture, students can be trained to think about why what they are learning is more important than getting the grade they desire. When students are faced with issues that are applicable to their lives, they are able to absorb and retain more information about the topic.

Even taking students on field trips to places in which the subjects of the classroom are used in varying career fields can further promote critical thinking skills. Seeing that the content of what we are learning in school actually matters can impact our future and place a larger importance on our schoolwork.

Modern, applicable topics like heroin will

automatically engage students. This will make projects interesting for students, but more importantly, understanding the effects of real-world problems will advance the acute cognition students need to find solutions for similar concerns.

Some issues in the world are just hard to accept and face, no matter how old we get. By understanding what can go wrong, students will learn at a crucial time in their lives how to take problems by the horns and find a solution.

Once students leave the university, they will be pursuing careers that will impact others. To become an above-par university, students need to be taught how to apply their knowledge and skills, for those are necessary for any job to be done well. By educating students on how to tackle real-world issues, the university is opening up a door to a better future, not just for itself, but for the world.

Although research projects and hands-on learning can be less convenient and often more expensive to the university, it fulfills the goals that students come here to accomplish. By focusing the university budget on lab work that teaches students about current day issues that apply to the subject they are learning about, SIUE will create a learning environment that will impact students not just on their journeys at the university level, but on their journeys through life.

Puja Mehta can be reached at [pmehta@alestlelive.com](mailto:pmehta@alestlelive.com).

## Avoid misinformation in media by researching credible sources

The moral of the story in today's world is that a lot of uninformed people do a whole lot of talking. It is important to not be one of those people; fortunately, this is completely in your control.

Dani Wilson  
Alestle  
Reporter

Many were aware of the measles outbreak that covered multiple states from December of last year forward. Among panicked questions about where the outbreak would go next came a flood of misinformed commentary from both media outlets and the general public. Somehow, this commentary led the public from talking about the measles to talking about immigration.

Most of the information was incorrect, including rumors that the measles actually hit Madison County — it did not. If we were to learn anything from the measles outbreak, it should be a serious lesson in critical thinking.

Many people believed that if America's

borders were not so open, the disease would not have been carried in from overseas. This is a knee-jerk reaction — an attempt to use a health problem to air political beliefs. To put it simply, using the United States' measles outbreak to argue against immigration takes critical thinking completely out of the equation.

Although some argue that the increase in immigration led to the measles outbreak, the immigration rate remains relatively unchanged while vaccination rates have gone down. The anti-vaccine movement itself involved quite a few people who employed selective hearing and argued from the small and inaccurate message they heard without going deeper into the issue. They did not do their research and it caused an uproar. The epicenter of the anti-vaccine movement then became the epicenter of the measles outbreak.

This brings up an important approach to the issues society faces every day. When considering contemporary and controversial issues, it is necessary to develop critical thinking skills. Do research — make sure you know the whole story before making a decision. There are

too many quick decisions made from a lack of information, and it has created a society in which we argue things that we do not really understand.

As a college student, you can either really impress people or allow them to stereotype you as another half-informed, overly exuberant kid. There are small things that can change this, especially when it comes to important issues. The best thing you can do when defending yourself on important issues is to do your research. Learn to analyze your arguments and back up what you are saying.

The result — you could tick some people off. However, you could also prove yourself a more credible and intelligent resource in a world full of people that accept statements at face value without pursuing a better understanding — a valuable skill for all college students as well as the general population. Who knows, with the information you dig up, you may even surprise yourself.

Dani Wilson can be reached at [dwilson@alestlelive.com](mailto:dwilson@alestlelive.com).

## How should the university direct more funding toward hands-on learning tools for students?

Answer our poll at [www.alestlelive.com](http://www.alestlelive.com).

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# SPORTS

Questions or comments regarding this section? Contact the Sports Editor at 650-3524 or [sports@alestlelive.com](mailto:sports@alestlelive.com)

Thursday, March 26, 2015

[www.alestlelive.com](http://www.alestlelive.com)

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## Standings



**\*Standings and Results as of 12 p.m. Wednesday, March 25**

### Baseball

	OVERALL	OVC
Belmont	12-8	5-0
SIUE	8-10	8-1
SE Missouri	13-9	7-2
Jax. State	12-8	5-4
Austin Peay	11-9	5-4
Tenn. Tech	10-11	4-5
Murray State	8-16	4-5
Morehead St.	11-10	3-6
UT Martin	4-16	2-7
E. Kentucky	6-14	1-4
E. Illinois	0-17	0-6

### Results from March 17

E. Kentucky 8, Marshall 4  
E. Tenn. State 17, Morehead St. 14  
Belmont 8, Middle Tenn. 2  
UT Martin 8, SIUC 7  
Tennessee 3, Austin Peay 0  
Miss. State 5, E. Illinois 2  
Vanderbilt 9, Tenn. Tech 1  
Arkansas 4, SE Missouri 3

### Results from March 14

Morehead St. 7, Marshall 1  
SLU 6, UT Martin 5  
SE Missouri 12, Arkansas 11  
Alabama St. 3, Jax. State 1  
Evansville 15, Murray State 2

### Results from March 20

ISU 8, E. Kentucky 2  
Murray State 4, Austin Peay 3  
SE Missouri 16, UT Martin 2  
Belmont 9, Morehead St. 0  
**Tenn. Tech 12, SIUE 3**  
Jax. State 6, E. Illinois 6

### Results from March 21

**Tenn. Tech 12, SIUE 3**

### Softball

	OVERALL	OVC
Jax. State	20-8	4-0
<b>SIUE</b>	<b>23-6</b>	<b>6-1</b>
E. Kentucky	13-16	4-2
Murray State	17-10	4-3
Tenn. Tech	17-13	4-3
Belmont	8-17	3-3
E. Illinois	8-15	3-4
UT Martin	13-13	2-4
SE Missouri	5-14	2-4
Tenn. State	9-18	2-5
Austin Peay	3-17	2-5
Morehead St.	9-13	1-3

### Results from March 18

Indiana St. 9, SE Missouri 4  
Morehead St. 4, Pikeville 2  
Tenn. Tech 8, Samford 7  
Dayton 2, E. Kentucky 2  
Austin Peay 8, E. Illinois 7  
UT Martin 14, Evansville 11  
Indiana St. 9, SE Missouri 5  
Morehead St. 8, Pikeville 0  
Tenn. Tech 10, Samford 5  
Dayton 10, E. Kentucky 9  
Lipscomb 13, Tenn. State 1  
E. Illinois 12, Austin Peay 0  
UT Martin 5, Evansville 1  
Tenn. State 10, Lipscomb 1

### Results from March 21

SIUE 5, E. Kentucky 1  
Tenn. Tech 3, SE Missouri 0  
Austin Peay 14, Tenn. State 13  
Jax. State 3, UT Martin 2  
Murray State 9, Belmont 0  
**SIUE 8, E. Kentucky 0**  
SE Missouri 6, Tenn. Tech 4  
Jax. State 9, UT Martin 1  
Belmont 7, Murray State 3

### Results from March 22

Tenn. State 8, Austin Peay 7  
E. Kentucky 4, E. Illinois 0  
**SIUE 1, Morehead St. 0**  
Belmont 8, Austin Peay 4

## Men's tennis goes 1-1 during weekend

**CAITLIN GROVE**  
*Alestle Lifestyles Editor*

The men's tennis team emerged .500 from this past weekend's play, earning a win and a loss against Murray State University and Austin Peay State University, respectively.

Head Coach Jason Coomer said he was impressed with the weekend's play.

"Playing outside for the first time at home this spring was a welcomed opportunity," Coomer said. "While I think we got off to a slow start in some areas, we found a way to turn around the momentum quickly and our guys performed extremely well."

On Friday, against Murray State, the Cougars won all three of their doubles matches. In the first doubles match of the day, seniors Nicolas Vincent and Stephen Washuta were defeated by their opponents 7-3. In the No. 2 match, redshirt junior Marten Jonsson and junior Nico Kuehn won by a score of 9-7. In the final doubles match, sophomore Matthew Hutchinson and junior Patrick Gaffigan dominated their opponent by a score of 8-3.

The team won five of its six singles matches. Each match went two sets, with the exception of the No. 4 match, where Washuta took his opponent the full three sets before emerging victorious 6-4, 5-7. In match No. 6, Gaffigan won by forfeit.

Coomer said while doubles play this weekend was not what the team would like, he remains confident in its abilities.

"It probably wasn't one of our better performances in doubles; with that being said, we definitely stepped it up on Saturday against Austin Peay," Coomer said. "We're fortunate in that a lot of teams only have two or three combinations they

feel comfortable putting out on the court, and we feel very confident in all 10 players we have and the five different doubles teams that we can put out at any point.

On Saturday against Austin Peay, the Cougars won two of their three doubles matches. In the first doubles match of the day, Vincent and Washuta defeated their opponents 8-6. In the No. 2 match, Jonsson and Kuehn fell short by a score of 8-2. In the final doubles match, Hutchinson and Gaffigan won 8-2.

The team won two of its six singles matches. In match No. 4, junior Jacob Perkins took his opponent two sets before emerging victorious 6-4, 6-4. In match No. 6, Gaffigan won by a score of 6-2, 6-4.

Coomer said there could have been improvements in the team's play against Austin Peay.

"I felt like we let one get away from us; Austin Peay is a team that was picked ahead of us in the preseason rankings; so with that being said, I felt we were in a position to take control early in the match, and for whatever reason, we couldn't find a way to get it done," Coomer said. "I was disappointed in the outcome of a few of our matches. We are much better than what we showed on Saturday. While our players would say they were also disappointed, we understand that this one match will not define us and that it's a long conference season."

The Cougars' next game is at 12 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, at

home against Eastern Illinois University.

Coomer said despite this weekend's results, he feels confident going into the team's upcoming match.

"Eastern Illinois is a very talented team that we need to make sure we are prepared for," Coomer said. "I really believe our guys understand what it's going to take from this point out to reach our goals. The first step of that this week is focusing on Eastern Illinois and playing to our capabilities that I know our guys expect of themselves."

Caitlin Grove can be reached at [cgrove@alestlelive.com](mailto:cgrove@alestlelive.com) or 650-3524.



Senior Nicolas Vincent hits a return against Austin Peay State University on Saturday, March 21.

| Photo by Christian K. Lee

## After rocky start, baseball starts conference play 8-1

**CAITLIN GROVE**  
*Alestle Lifestyles Editor*

Despite losing its first conference game of the season, the baseball team won its series this past weekend against Tennessee Technological University, launching its Ohio Valley Conference record to 8-1, 8-10 overall.

The team fell in the first game of the series on Friday, March 20, by a score of 12-3. SIUE remained scoreless until the top of the sixth inning, when senior outfielder Nick Lombardo sent a home run down the infield line. The team scored again in the top of the eighth on a sac fly to center by junior infielder Collin Book and once more in the top of the ninth on a sac fly off the bat of senior first baseman Alec Saikal.

On defense, senior starting pitcher Ryan Daniels pitched 3 2/3 innings, giving up eight runs on seven hits, receiving the loss and leaving with a record of 1-3. Junior relief pitcher Caleb

Wilkerson gave up five runs on three hits in 3 1/3 innings on the mound. Junior infielder Jacob Stewart closed the game out with one run on two hits in one inning pitched.

Head Coach Tony Stoecklin said improvements could have been made across the board during Friday's game.

"I feel we didn't play very well; our starting pitching wasn't good, and we gave up way too many runs," Stoecklin said. "We faced a tough pitcher; I thought he did a great job nullifying us. I thought we could have taken better at bats, but maybe part of that was we faced a good pitcher."

The team came back fighting Saturday, clinching a 7-2 win, with four runs in the top of the first inning. Senior catcher Parker Guinn kicked off the day with a single through the right side, scoring Lombardo. Saikal earned yet another sac fly run batted in, followed by consecutive run-scoring singles off the bats of junior infielder Skyler Geissinger and sophomore outfielder Austin

Verschoore, giving the team a 4-0 lead.

The Cougars grabbed another three runs in the top of the second. After an error and hit by pitch in the inning, SIUE scored two unearned runs, courtesy of freshman outfielder Dustin Woodcock. Saikal then flew out to the infield, scoring senior infielder Chase Green and solidifying the teams score of seven runs.

Junior starting pitcher P.J. Schuster pitched six innings, giving up no runs on four hits with six strikeouts, earning the win and launching his record to 3-0. Senior pitcher Brett Thomas collected his second save of the season, closing out the game with one run on two hits in three innings pitched.

Stoecklin said both impressive pitching and offense led to the team's win Saturday.

"P. J. Schuster was a key to that game. We needed a huge start from him, and he came out and gave us six quality innings and that was a difference in the

ball game," Stoecklin said. "I thought the offense did a great job — we manufactured runs and found a way to win."

The Cougars clinched the series win on Sunday, defeating Tennessee Tech 7-3. After quickly falling behind 3-0, the team answered back in the top of the third on a single by junior infielder Collin Book, scoring freshman infielder Mario Tursi.

In the top of the fourth, Verschoore earned an RBI on a fielder's choice. SIUE grabbed three runs in the sixth, first off a double to left field by Geissinger. Following this, Verschoore singled through the left side, scoring Saikal. The team got one more RBI in the inning, off a sac fly off the bat of Tursi.

Later in the game, the Cougars earned another run, courtesy of Woodcock in the top of the seventh. Guinn then launched a home run to left field in the top of the ninth.

Read more about the baseball team's weekend at [alestlelive.com](http://alestlelive.com)



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